

REMARKS

The Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and the reasons that follow.

Claims 6-10 are cancelled without prejudice.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendments to the claims, claims 2-4, 13-16, 18-24, 27-35 and 38-44 remain pending in this application.

A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate status identifier for each claim.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

In section 1 of the Office Action, claims 6 and 10 are rejected as being anticipated by Hashimoto (U.S. Patent No. 6,695,471). While Applicants do not necessarily agree with the rejections of claims 6 and 10 or the associated reasoning as set forth in the Office Action, the Applicants hereby cancel claims 6 and 10 without prejudice in order to advance prosecution. The Applicants reserve the right to present the subject matter of claims 6 and 10 in a later application.

Allowable Subject Matter

In section 2 of the Office Action, claims 7-9 are objected to as being as being allowable except for their dependency on a rejected base claim. Claims 7-9 variously depend from claims 6 and/or 10. Again, while the Applicants do not necessarily agree with the rejections of claims 6 and 10 or the associated reasoning as set forth in the Office Action, the Applicants hereby cancel claims 7-9 without prejudice in order to advance prosecution. The Applicants reserve the right to present the subject matter of claims 7-9 in a later application.

Allowed Claims

In section 3 of the Office Action, claims 2-4, 13-16, 18-24, 27-35 and 38-44 are allowed. The Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowance for claims 2-4, 13-16, 18-24, 27-35 and 38-44.

Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance

While the Applicants agree that allowed claims 2-4, 13-16, 18-24, 27-35 and 38-44 recite a combination of subject matter that is patentable over the cited references, the Applicants do not necessarily agree with or acquiesce in the reasoning as set forth in the Office Action. Moreover, the Applicants note that various other subject matter and/or combinations of subject matter may be patentable for other reasons than those set forth in the Office Action. The Applicants expressly reserve the right to set forth additional and/or alternative reasons for patentability and/or allowance in connection with the present application or any future proceeding.

Conclusion

The Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 06-1447. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 06-1447.

If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, the Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 06-1447.

Respectfully submitted,

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